

Laster in Beaumont & Fletcher's Works. Vol. 937. Numb. 6.

MAUDLIN,

The MERCHANT's Daughter of BRISTOL.

P. 3. 19

Note, As the Use of these Old Songs is very great, in respect that many Children never would have learn'd to Read, had they not took a Delight in perusing over J. ne Shore, or Robin Hood, &c. which has intently stole into them a Curiosity and Desire of Reading other like Stories. 'till they have improv'd themselves more in a short time than perhaps they would have done in some Years at School: In order still to make them more useful, I premise to affix an Introduction, in which I shall point out what is Fact and what is Fiction in each Song; which will (as may be readily suppos'd) give not only Children, but Persons of more ripe Years, an Insight into the Reality, Intent and Design, as well as many times the Author and Time when such Songs were made, which has not hitherto been explain'd.

There is one Passage in the following Song, which petty Criticks have very much cav'd at, and that is the Time Mandlin's Lover lay under Condemnation; but if they had consider'd that he was in one of the Inquisition Prisons, where People sometimes lay several Years, they wou'd have found their Cavil very unjust. I must own I cannot so easily answer another Objection, and that is the Mercy shown by the Judges to the three Prisoners, those very Pious Men never having, since the first Foundation of that Court, given any other Instance of it.

To the Tune of, *The Maiden's Joy.*

BEhold the Touch-stone of true Love,
Maudlin, the Merchant's Daughter of Bristol Town,
Where firm Affection nothing could move,
her Favour bears the lovely Brown.
A gallant Youth was dwelling by,
which long had born this Maiden great good will,
She loved him most faithfully,
but all her Friends withstood it still.
The young man now perceiving well,
he could not get the favour of her friends,
The force of sorrow to expel,
and view strange countries he intends.
And now to take his last farewell
of his true love, his fair and constant Maudlin,
With musick sweet that did excel,
he play'd under her window then.
Farewel, (quoth he) mine own true love,
farewel the dear and chiefest treasure of my heart,
Thro' fortune's spight that false did prove,
I am forc'd from thee to part.
Into the Land of fair Italy,
there will I wail and weary out my life in woe,
Seeing my true love is kept from me,
I hold my life a mortal foe.
Fair Bristol town therefore adieu,
for Padua shall be my habitation now,
Although my love doth rest in thee,
to whom alone my heart I vow.
With trickling tears thus did he sing,
sighs and sobs descending from his heart full sore,
He said, when he his hands did wring,
farewel, sweet love, for evermore.
Fair Maudlin from a window high,
saw her true love with musick where he stood,
But not a word she did reply,
fearing her parents angry mood.
Tears she spent that woeful night,
wishing herself, tho' naked, with her faithful friend,
She blames her friends and fortune's spight,
that wrought her love such luckless end;
And in her heart she made a vow,
to forsake her country and kindred all,
And for to follow her true love,
and all chance that might befall.

The night is gone, and the day is come,
and in the morning very early did she rise,
[Bristol Town, She gets down in the lower room,
where fndry teamen she espies.
A gallant master among them all,
the master of a great and goodly ship was he,
Who were thus waiting in the hall,
to speak with her father, if it might be.
She kindly takes him by the hand,
good sir, would you speak with any here?
Quoth he, fair maid, and therefore I do stand.
Then, gentle sir, I pray draw near.
Into a pleasant parlour by,
hand in hand she brings the seaman all alone,
Sighing to him most piteously,
she thus to him did make her moan.
She falls upon her bended knee,
Good sir, (said she) pity a woman's woe,
And prove a faithful friend to me,
that I to you my grief may show.
Sith you repose your trust (he said)
in me unknown, and eke a stranger here,
Be you assur'd, most proper maid,
most faithful still I will appear.
I have a brother (then quoth she)
whom as my life I love and favour tenderly,
In Padua, alas! is he
full sick, God wot, and like to die,
Full fain I would my brother see,
but that my father will not yield to let me go,
Therefore, good sir, be kind to me,
and unto me this favour show,
Some ship-boy's garment bring to me,
that I disguis'd may go unknown,
And unto sea I'll go with thee,
if thus much favour might be shown.
Fair maid (quoth he) take here my hand,
I will fulfill each thing that you desire,
And see you safe in that same land,
and in the place that you require.
She gave to him a tender kiss,
and said, your servant, master, I will be,
And prove your faithful friend for this,
sweet master then forget not me.

This done, as they had both agreed,
soon after that, by break of day,
He brings her garments then with speed,
therein herself she did array,
And e're her father did arise,
she meets her master as he walked in the hall,
She did attend on him like wife,
until her father did him fall.
But here the merchant made an end
of those his weighty matters all.
His wife came weeping in with speed,
saying, our daughter's gone away,
The merchant then amaz'd in mind,
yonder vile wretch entic'd my child away.
But I well wot I shall him find,
in Italy at Padua.
With that bespake the master brave,
worshipful merchant, rather goes this youth,
And any thing that you would crave,
he will perform, and write the truth.
Sweet youth (quoth he) if it be so,
bear me a letter to the English there,
And gold on thee I will bestow,
my daughter's welfare I do fear.
Her mother took her by the hand,
fair youth, if e'er thou dost my daughter see,
Let me soon thereof understand,
and there is twenty crowns for thee.
Thus through the daughter's strange disguise,
her mother knew not when she spoke unto her.
Then after her master strait she hits,
taking her leave with countenance mild.
Thus to the sea sweet Maudlin is gone,
with her gentle master, God send fair wind:
Where we a while must let them all alone,
till you the second part do find.

P A R T II.

Welcome, sweet Maudlin from the seas,
where bitter storms and tempests do arise.
The pleasant banks of Italy
you may behold with mortal Eyes.
Thanks, gentle master, (then said she)
a faithful friend in sorrow thou hast been

If fortune once do smile on me,
my gratitude shall soon be seen.
Bless'd be land that feeds my love,
bless'd be the place wherein he doth abide.
No trial I will stick to prove,
whereby my true love may be try'd.
Now with I walk with joyful heart,
to view the Town whereat he doth remain,
And seek him out in every part,
until his sight I do obtain.
And I (quoth he) will not forsake
sweet Maudlin in her sorrows up and down,
In wealth or woe thy part I'll take,
and bring thee safe to Padua town.
And after many weary steps,
in Padua they arriv'd at the last,
For very joy her heart it leaps,
she thinks not on the sorrows past.
Condemn'd he was to die, alas!
except he would from his religion turn,
But rather than he would go to mass,
in fiery flames he vow'd to burn.
Now doth sweet Maudlin weep and wail,
her joy is turn'd to sorrow, grief and care,
For nothing could her plaints prevail,
for death alone must be his share.
She walks under the prison walls
where her true love did languish in distress,
Then wofully for food he calls,
when hunger did his heart oppress.
He sighs and sobs, and makes great moan,
farewel, sweet-heart, for evermore.
And all my friends that have me known,
in Bristol town with wealth and store.
But most of all farewell (quoth he)
my own sweet Maudlin, whom I left behind,
For never more thou wilt me see,
woe to thy father most unkind.
How well were I if thou wert here,
with thy fair hands to close my wretched eyes,
My torments easy would appear,
my soul with joy would scale the skies.
When Maudlin heard her lover's moan,
her eyes with tears, her heart soon filled was.
To speak with him no means was found,
such grievous doom did on him pass.
Then she put off her lad's attire,
her maiden weeds upon her seemly set.
At the judge's house she did inquire,
and there she did a service get.
She did her duty there so well,
and eke so well herself she did behave,
With her in love her master fell,
his servant's favour he doth crave.
Maudlin (quoth he) my heart's delight,
to whom my heart is so inclin'd,
Breed not my death through thy despight,
a faithful friend thou shalt me find.
Grant me thy love, fair maid, quoth he,
and then desire what thou canst devise,
And I will grant it unto thee,
whereby thy credit may arise.
I have a brother, sir, said she,
for his religion is condemn'd to die,
In loathsome prison he is cast,
oppress'd with grief and misery;

Grant me my brother's life, the father said,
and now to you my love and liking I give,
That may not be, quoth he, fair maid,
except he turn he cannot live.
An English friar there is, she said,
of learning great, and passing pure of life,
Let him to my brother be sent,
and he will finish soon the strife.
Her master granted her request,
the mariner in friar's weeds she did array,
And to her love that lay distress'd,
she did a letter soon convey.
When he had read these gentle lines,
his heart was ravish'd with pleasant joy,
Where now she is full well he knew,
the friar likewise was not coy,
But did declare to him at large,
the enterprize his love had taken in hand.
The young man did the friar charge,
his love should straight depart that land:
Here is no place for her, he said,
but woeful death and danger of her life.
Professing truth I was betray'd,
and fearful flames must end the strife.
For e're I will my faith deny,
and swear my self to follow damned antichrist.
I'll yield my body for to die,
to live in Heaven with the Highest.
O sir, the gentle friar said,
consent thereto, and end the strife:
A woful match, quoth he, is made,
where Christ is left to gain a wife.
When she had us'd all means she might,
to save his life, yet all wou'd not be,
Then of the judge she claim'd her right,
to die the death as well as he.
When no persuasion could prevail,
nor change her mind in any thing she said,
She was with him condemn'd to die,
and for them both one fire was made.
Yea, arm in arm most joyfully,
these lovers twain unto the fire did go,
The mariner most faithfully,
was likewise partner of their woe.
But when the judges understood,
the faithful Friendship did in them remain,
They sav'd their lives, and afterwards
to England sent them back again.
Now was their sorrow turn'd to joy,
and faithful lovers have their hearts desire,
Their pain so well they did employ,
God granted what they did desire.
And when they did to England come,
and in merry Bristol they arrived at the last,
Great joy there was to all, and some
that heard the dangers they had pass'd.
Her father he was dead, God wot,
and her mother was joyful at their sight,
Their wishes she denied not,
but wedded them to hearts delight.
Her gentle master she desired
to be her father, and at Church to give her hand,
It was fulfilled as she required,
to the joy of all good men.